
Feathered Thorn, *Colotois pennaria* (L.) (Lep.: Geometridae: A very late record in Bedfordshire

My wife Melissa and I were walking along a path next to the main drive at the Headquarters of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds at The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire (VC 30) on the afternoon of 16 January 2006 when she spotted a moth low down on the trunk of a tree. Taking a closer look it was apparent that it was a female Feathered Thorn *Colotois pennaria*. This is a species that we normally see in our garden trap in mid-autumn. Skinner (1984. *Colour Identification Guide to Moths of the British Isles*. Viking) records mid-September to mid-November as the adult flight period; South (1906-7. *The Moths of the British Isles (Series 2)*, Warne) lists October and November; Waring & Townsend (2003. *Field Guide to the Moths of Great Britain and Ireland*. British Wildlife Publishing) list mid-September to early December. For Bedfordshire, Arnold et al (1997. *The Butterflies and Moths of Bedfordshire*) give weeks 38 to 48 for Bedfordshire [17 September to 2 December] with the peak in weeks 41 to 45 [8 October to 11 November].

I checked with the macro-moth recorder for VC30, Les Hill, and the recorder for adjacent Hertfordshire (VC 20), Colin Plant; both confirmed they had no records of the species being seen any later than the first week of December. I subsequently checked with recorders for other adjacent vice-counties: Buckinghamshire (VC 24), Huntingdonshire (VC 31) and Northamptonshire (VC 32). The latest record from these was mid-December in VC 32.

This find of a live Feathered Thorn in mid-January is exceptionally late though many fewer light traps are put out in December and January so there is less recording effort at this time of the year. I would like to thank the following people for checking their vice-county records for me: M. Albertini (VC 24), B. Dickerson (VC 31), L. J. Hill (VC30), C. W. Plant and the Herts Moth Group (VC 20) and J. Ward (VC 32).— ANDY BANTHORPE, 32 Long Close, Lower Stondon, Bedfordshire SG16 6JS.

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The National Macro-moth Recording Scheme

Butterfly Conservation is delighted to announce that, after several years of careful planning and hard work, the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for funding for the National Macro-moth Recording Scheme has been successful. The award is for £806,000. This funding will cover the initial four years of the scheme, though we intend the scheme to run beyond this.

Many of you will be aware of the higher profile 'Planning Phase' of the project, which took place during 2003 and 2004, with articles appearing in several journals subsequently – we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who contributed and supported this part of the process. We would also like to thank the many organisations and individuals who have offered matched funding for the